

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MONTANA  
BUTTE DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

ZACHARY VERNON STEPHENS,

Defendant.

CR 22–20–BU–DLC

ORDER

Before the Court is United States Magistrate Judge Kathleen L. DeSoto’s Findings & Recommendation Concerning Plea. (Doc. 33.) Because neither party objected, they are not entitled to *de novo* review. 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1); *United States v. Reyna-Tapia*, 328 F.3d 1114, 1121 (9th Cir. 2003). Therefore, the Court reviews the Findings and Recommendation for clear error. *McDonnell Douglas Corp. v. Commodore Bus. Mach., Inc.*, 656 F.2d 1309, 1313 (9th Cir. 1981). Clear error exists if the Court is left with a “definite and firm conviction that a mistake has been committed.” *United States v. Syrax*, 235 F.3d 422, 427 (9th Cir. 2000).

Mr. Stephens is charged with two counts of travel with the intent to engage in illicit sexual conduct, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2423(b) (Count I and II), as set forth in the Indictment. (Doc. 3.) Judge DeSoto recommends that this Court accept Mr. Stephen’s guilty plea as to Count I after Mr. Stephens appeared before

her pursuant to Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11. The Court finds no clear error in Judge DeSoto's Findings and Recommendation and adopts them in full, including the recommendation to defer acceptance of the Plea Agreement until sentencing when the Court will have reviewed the Plea Agreement and Presentence Investigation Report. In light of the United States' motion for preliminary order of forfeiture (Doc. 35), the Court will address the issue of forfeiture by separate order.

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED that Judge DeSoto's Findings and Recommendation (Doc. 33) is ADOPTED in full.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Mr. Stephen's motion to change plea (Doc. 22) is GRANTED.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that Mr. Stephens is adjudged guilty as charged in Count I of the Indictment.

DATED this 1st day of May, 2023.



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Dana L. Christensen, District Judge  
United States District Court